GENERAL CARE (Cont'd)

Most Hibiscus plants will benefit from four nutritional sprays each year. These sprays provide minor elements of iron, zinc, magnesium, molybdenum, iodine, manganese, and cobalt. Sure-Grow Liquid plant food is suggested because of the greater number of minor elements it contains.

Since Hibiscus are often damaged by cold, you can help them through a cold winter by seeing that they are properly fed. Minor elements increase their cold resistance. Do not fertilize then too late in the fall as they should not go into the winter in a succulent condition. A good high bank of dirt free of straw or leaves will save your plants from freezing in winter. Nematodes sometimes attack Hibiscus. Mulching will help to control these pests, or they can be treated with VC-13, use this material carefully, never use it above the recommended strength. I am told although I have not used it, that sugar will control nematodes.

Hibiscus should be fed at regular intervals from March to August. A suggested formula for this feeding is a 4-6-8-3-½-¼. Give them their last feeding in October with an 0-10-10 formula.

The cause of bud drop of Hibiscus depends upon the variety of Hibiscus and all growing conditions. Too much nitrogen, poor drainage, drought, minor elements deficiency or in fact anything that injures the health of the plant will cause the buds to drop.

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KILGORE SEED COMPANY
2216 Anderson Avenue Fort Myers, Florida

Kilgore's Bred-Rite Seeds,
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See us for your Hibiscus and Orchid Supplies

COMPLETE GARDENING EQUIPMENT

MAY, JUNE, JULY CULTURE for Central Florida

- Burt Barling

March was kind of a stinker with little rain and heaps of high, drying winds. Hope it didn't give you too much trouble.

You can talk to many nursery men and every one will have his own pet methods for Hibiscus growing and fertilizing. This is the method that has proved most successful with me.

For May, I like to have foliage on plants to protect them from summer heat and I use 6-6-6 - 50% organic for that and I also take a little out of the plant tops to force it to branch out. Since aphis will be with us from now on, plants should be sprayed twice a month with Isotox, using one tablespoonful to the gallon and the spray can be used on and under the leaves without harm to leaves. Butterfly worms and grasshoppers will be a trouble, so the best way to be rid of them is to use a formula with arsenic or Black Leaf 40. It is best to spray before noon and no more than 24 hours after plants have been watered.

It is thrifty, when fertilizing, to loosen up the soil around the Hibiscus. That will let any rain benefit the plant.

Chelated iron will be of help in chlorosis problems or bleaching out. One teaspoonful to three gallons of water is the proper amount to use because it is powerful. For this reason, roots should get the solution, as the leaves are apt to iron burn.

May and June are your best months for new grafts. If you are planning to get more Hibiscus, it is wise to get them planted so that they will get set with a good root system before fall. This will give them their chance to survive next winter.

For June and July you should change over to fertilizer 4-6-8 or 4-8-8-50% organic and many people prefer to fertilize twice a month during the rainy period to keep the blooms coming. At this time, if you have a low spot, find a way to lead off the water.

'Bye now —— Burt.

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